

Reconstruction of Proto-Triquet Phonemes

Triquet languages (Chicahuaxtla Triquet, Copala Triquet and Itunyoso Triquet) are spoken in Oaxaca, Mexico and belong to the Mixtecan family of the Otomanguean stock. In Proto-Triquet, thirteen obstruents (/t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /kʷ/, /gʷ/, /ʔ/, /β/, /s/, /š/, /ts/, /ch/, /chr/), five resonants (/m/, /n/, /l/, /r/, /y/) and eleven vowels (/i/, /e/, /i/, /ë/, /a/, /o/, /u/, /in/, /in/, /an/, /un/) are reconstructible. These Proto-Triquet phonemes have undergone series of historical sound changes in its three daughter languages: e.g.

- (1) Obstruent sounds became voiced in non-final syllables in Chicahuaxtla Triquet and all obstruent sounds except for /β/ became voiceless in Itunyoso Triquet.

| Proto-Triquet | Chicahuaxtla | Copala | Itunyoso | |
|---------------|--------------|--------|----------|----------------------|
| *ko'oo | go'o | ko'oo | ko'o | 'plate' |
| *dah | dah | dah | tah | 'flower (possessed)' |
| *sika' | zika'a | ska' | sika' | 'hard' |

- (2) *V > ø between *s, *š or *r and a particular consonant (*t, *k, *kʷ, *m, *n or *l) in Copala Triquet. *r was also fricated and became a voiceless retroflex fricative šr.

| Chicahuaxtla | Itunyoso | Proto-Triquet | Copala | |
|--------------|----------|---------------|--------|-----------------|
| ziki | siki | *sikii | skii | 'crust' |
| žutah | chutah | *šutah | štah | 'deer' |
| rune | rune | *runee | rnee | => šrnee 'bean' |

- (3) High short vowels became mid short vowels (*i > e, *u > o, *in > en, *un > on) in a final syllable in Copala Triquet.

| Chicahuaxtla | Itunyoso | Proto-Triquet | Copala | |
|--------------|----------|---------------|--------|---------------------|
| nu'wi | nu'bi | *nu'bi | nu'be | 'smooth' |
| duku | tuku | *tuku | tuko | 'to play' |
| achin | achin | *achin | achen | 'to pass, to cross' |
| ni'yun | ni'yun | *ni'yun | ni'yon | 'to forget' |

- (4) *i & *ë > i, and *in > on (when *in was short in a final syllable) ~ un (elsewhere) in Copala Triquet. *i > i, *ë > e, and *in > in in Itunyoso Triquet.

| Proto-Triquet | Chicahuaxtla | Copala | Itunyoso | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| *kih | kīhī | kih | kih | 'mountain' |
| *sigë' | zigë'ë | sigi' | sike' | 'mud' |
| *tinī [tinīn] | dinī [dinīn] | tino [tinon] | tini [tinin] | 'nopal (cactus)' |
| *'nīī ['nīīn] | 'nī ['nīn] | 'nuu ['nuun] | 'nih ['ninh] | 'corn' |

In this paper, I will show how the Proto-Triquet phonemes were reconstructed and how the reconstructed Proto-Triquet phonemes have undergone historical sound changes in Chicahuaxtla Triquet, Copala Triquet and Itunyoso Triquet.